

The sound insulating unit of Okubo includes a "flexible" sheet. If such sheets were vulcanized, it is likely they would be less flexible than unvulcanized rubber sheets.

Additionally, none of these references, alone or in combination, suggest the use or desirability of vulcanizing these types of rubber compositions.

Based on the above arguments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of claims 1-5.

Claim 6, has been amended to include limitations regarding types and density of the metal oxide fillers.

Lorraine does not disclose what types of metal oxide fillers are acceptable, nor does it disclose density requirements.

Kalinowski discloses alumina, which according to information available on the internet, has a lower density than that required by newly amended claim 6. This reference also discloses a blend with zirconia, which is not a metal selected from Groups IVA, VA, IB, VIB, VIIB and VIIIB metals.

Hayashi discloses a rubber or resin composition including iron oxide particles having an iron oxide core which contains SiO_2 . However, this reference limits the bulk density of these particles is 0.80 to 1.50 g/cm^3 , and states that when the bulk density exceeds 1.5 g/cm^3 , the particles are not well mixed with the rubber or thermoplastic resin.

Okubo discloses a polymeric material and a high density inorganic material, including iron oxide (Fe_2O_3 , density 5.24 g/cm^3) and lead oxide (PbO , Pb_3O_4). Iron oxide has a density lower than the claimed 5.7, and the lead oxides do not fit within the formulas contained in amended claim 6.

Morgan is directed toward a golf ball, including a core having a liquid material including latexes of natural rubber and synthetic rubbers, and a high density filler selected from zinc oxide (ZnO , density 5.6 g/cm^3), barites, tungsten oxide (WO_2 , density 10.8 g/cc) or metal fillers. Morgan does not include any limitations or suggestions regarding type of filler or minimum density requirement for the high density fillers.

None of these references anticipates or renders claims claims 6-14 obvious. These references neither include all of the limitations of amended claim 6, nor do they suggest the limitations regarding filler type and density. Applicants request reconsideration of these claims.

Claims 15-17 are directed to a vehicle tire component made from the rubber of claim 6. Since none of the references cited by the Examiner include any reference to tire applications, nor any suggestions of the beneficial use of such compositions in tire applications, Applicants believe these claims are both novel and unobvious.

Claims 18 and 20 have been amended to include the limitations of claim 6. The same arguments apply for these newly amended claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the above references teach or suggest the claims of the present invention and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a).

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and Remarks, applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and an early favorable response is respectfully solicited.

In the event that any additional fee is due or that any amount should be credited, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-0925.

Respectfully submitted,

August 23, 2002
Date

Meredith E. Palmer
Meredith E. Palmer
Registration No. 47,839

Bridgestone/Firestone Americas Holding, Inc.
1200 Firestone Parkway
Akron, Ohio 44317-0001
Phone: 330-379-6543
Fax: 330-379-4064